

Q. What is the timeframe for Conservation Restriction (CR) review by DCS?

A. CRs must be reviewed and approved by EEA-DCS prior to recording. It is important to give the CR reviewer as much time as possible for review. File the draft CR document with the required separate Conservation Restriction Application (available at www.mass.gov/eea/dcs) as soon as possible, but no shorter than a month before the grant reimbursement will be requested. CRs that will be held by a state or federal land agency will be reviewed by that agency's legal staff, and do not need to be reviewed by DCS.

Q. If a community is using Community Preservation Act funds for its portion of the grant, is a CR required?

A. Yes, use of CPA funds requires the conveyance of a Chapter 184 CR to an eligible non-profit organization. If the community is acquiring only the CR, it does not need to convey a partial interest in the CR.

Q. Can you reapply for a grant that was not funded in a prior year?

A. Yes, but be sure to update the application form, appraisal (if applicable), and attachments.

Q. Can the subject of a PARC grant application be on school department land?

A. No – PARC grant are for park department/commission land only.

Q. What is the budget for the grants?

A. Since the FY13 budget has not been set yet, the budget for these grant is not yet known.

Q. Can a municipality use an appraisal that was done for another entity or must it complete its own?

A. We cannot accept appraisals conducted for or on behalf of the seller. The municipality must be listed as one of the entities for whom the appraisal was written.

Q. How does a Green Community designation affect funding?

A. Green Communities receive a small advantage in the PARC and LAND rating system. The rating sheets for each program provide a detailed breakdown of application scoring, and are included in the grant RFRs.

Q. How close to public transportation does a park have to be to qualify for points in the PARC rating system?

A. Within walking distance, so within a ½ mile to a bus, train, or T stop.

Q. If a municipality is receiving a donation from a non-profit partner for a project, how should the municipal vote be written?

A. Since DCS can only reimburse on municipal expenditures as documented through cancelled municipal checks, etc., a municipal vote must appropriate 100% of the total project cost. How the municipality deals with the donation is up to it to decide.

Q. Can a city/town apply for more than one grant?

A. Yes, however, it is very unlikely that a city or town would receive approval for more than one grant.

Q. At what point should a community apply for a grant if it would like to build a park on top of a landfill?

A. When the landfill has been capped and is ready for development.

Q. When can a community schedule a site visit with DCS?

A. Traditionally, once the grant applications are received a site visit will be scheduled. However, DCS staff can look at a project at any time.

Q. How are the Environmental Justice points allocated in the rating system?

A. In the PARC grant, there are two places where EJ points are allocated. First, the amount of land area where EJ neighborhoods are found within the community. Second, how many EJ criteria are met where the park is located. In the LAND grant, EJ points are allocated in one place – the amount of land area where EJ neighborhoods are found within the community

Q. If applying for a LAND grant to acquire the fee interest or a CR on a working farm, what kind of public access is required?

A. The public must have full access to fee acquisitions. Conservation Restrictions must also provide public access, but there can be some limitations on the location and type of access in order to reasonably accommodate normal farm operations of the fee owner. These arrangements are typically unique to each property and should be discussed in the project narrative and with DCS staff during the site visit.

Q. How do you calculate demographics?

A. DCS uses data provided by the Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development to calculate demographic scores.

Q. If the municipality is acquiring land that was a brownfield site, is it necessary to provide information to prove that it was?

A. Yes – without this information, the application will not receive points in this category. Please note that the requirements for brownfield projects changed in last year's Request for Response. Be sure to read this year's RFR thoroughly.

Q. Do urban areas ever receive LAND grants?

A. Yes.